

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 09564 291748Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 HA-05 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7328
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EG SY LY PEPR
SUBJECT: PRESS LAMBASTS QADHAFI AND SYRIANS

REFS: (A) TRIPOLI 462, (B) CAIRO 9406

SUMMARY: EGYPTIAN PRESS ATTACKS LIBYA AND SYRIA ON
LEBANON, SAYING QADHAFI'S LATEST OFFER OF
LIBYAN ARMED FORCES RENDERS REJECTION FRONT MEANINGLESS.
SYRIAN INACTION, WHILE LEBANESE AND PALESTINIANS KILLED,
STRONGLY CRITICIZED. DESPITE U.S. CONCERNS, EGYPTIAN
PROPAGANDA BLASTS LIKELY CONTINUE. END SUMMARY.

1. TAKING LEAD FROM QADHAFI'S REMARKS AT BRITISH EVACU-
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ATION DAY FESTIVITIES (REF A), ALL EGYPTIAN PAPERS MARCH
29 RIDICULED LIBYA'S LEADER AND REJECTION
FRONT. TYPICALLY, AHRAH EDITOR-IN-CHIEF HAMDI GAMAL
DISMISSED QADHAFI'S RENEWED OFFER PLACE LIBYAN ARMED
FORCES AT EGYPT'S DISPOSAL AS MEANINGLESS. QADHAFI
DECLARATION READ AS CONFESSION THAT EGYPT REMAINS ONLY
REAL POWER IN ARAB WORLD, OTHERWISE OFFER WOULD HAVE

BEEN MADE TO DAMASCUS. STATEMENT ALSO SEEN AS CERTIFYING REJECTION FRONT AS "WORTHLESS."

2. AKHBAR CONCENTRATED ON DEMONSTRATED GAP BETWEEN LIBYA AND SYRIA, LATTER WHICH QADHAFI NOTED SUPPLIED MAJORITY OF TROOPS FOR ADF--"FORCE OF GREAT SHAME." SYRIAN TROOPS LOOKED ON, SAID AKHBAR, WHILE LEBANESE AND PALESTINIANS BEING SLAIN. AKHER SAA PURSUED SAME LINE AS AKHBAR, CLAIMING SYRIAN FORCES REMAINED BEHIND RED LINE DESPITE BEING EQUIPPED WITH "SOVIET ARSENAL", INCLUDING RECENTLY SUPPLIED LIBYAN MIG-25'S. DESPITE THIS, SYRIA LET PALESTINIANS DOWN, ALLOWED THEM BE SUBJECT TO "SHELLING AND DEATH." SYRIA'S INTENT, CONCLUDED AKHER SAA, IS TO SUFFOCATE PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON BY DEPRIVING THEM OF ALL AID.

4. COMMENT: EGYPTIANS BELIEVE SYRIANS AND OTHER REJECTIONISTS ARE HIGHLY VULNERABLE FOR INACTION IN SOUTH LEBANON. DESPITE U.S. CONCERNS, EGYPTIANS ARE APPARENTLY EQUALLY CONVINCED THAT SYRIA WILL CONTINUE AT ALL COST TO AVOID CLASH WITH ISRAELIS AND PROPAGANDA BLASTS DO NOT THEREFORE RISK PROVOKING FOOLHARDY SYRIAN ACTIONS. EILTS

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